

CUT IN LABOR-HHS APPROPRIATIONS IS ASSAULT ON AVERAGE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

(Mr. KLINK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, this week the Labor-HHS appropriations bill is going to be taken up by this House. This really, Mr. Speaker, is an assault on average American working persons and their families.

This bill will come to the floor with a cut of 31 percent in enforcement for health and safety protections. At a time when 55,000 American workers a year are killed on the job, when tens of thousands more are permanently disabled each year from work-related injuries and diseases, we are going to cut the agency that enforces worker safety by 33 percent.

There is a cut in the dislocated workers' program of 31 percent. Now I happen to come from an area where, in 13 counties in southwestern Pennsylvania, about 150,000 workers were dislocated from the manufacturing industries. We have to retrain those workers. We are trying to cut back on welfare, we are trying to make sure that people have work at a time that we are saying if you are dislocated because your company shuts down or because something else has happened, that we are not going to retrain you for work anymore. We are going to cut that back by 31 percent.

Mr. Speaker, all the worker safety is being cut, including MSHA, which has really cut down on the number of mine deaths. In the 25 years before MSHA was created in the late 1960's, over 12,000 miners were killed. In the 25 years since then it is about 2,000. These are the kinds of cuts American workers cannot afford.

MEDICARE REFORM IS A BIPARTISAN ISSUE

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it has been almost 4 months now that the trustees of the Medicare plan, the Clinton trustees, have come out with a report saying that Medicare is going broke in the year 2002. About 2 months ago President Clinton said:

We cannot leave the system the way it is . . . when you think about what the baby boomers require . . . that's going to require significant long-term structural adjustment. We'll have to look at what we can do there. But the main thing we can't do—we can't have this thing go broke in the meanwhile.

I think, certainly, this is a very significant thing for all of us to realize, that Congress must, No. 1, fix Medicare. No. 2, we have got to do it in a fair way. It cannot be done on the back of one group over another one. No. 3, we have to save the system by strengthening it and preserving it. The proposal that we have in our budget is

to increase spending per recipient from \$4,800 today to \$6,700 in the year 2002. We are also probably going to have options on Medisave accounts, a choice of doctor, managed care plans, and so forth.

I think the most important thing for right now is for us to acknowledge that Medicare is going broke. It is a bipartisan problem. We welcome the ideas of all the Democrats, Republicans, and senior citizens throughout our great country.

EDUCATION CUTS NEVER HEAL

(Mr. BAESLER asked and was given permission to address the Houses for 1 minute.)

Mr. BAESLER. Mr. Speaker, as we begin to consider the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, I am reminded of the oft-quoted and foreboding statement in the 1983 report "A Nation at Risk":

If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge. Moreover, we have dismantled essential support systems which helped make those gains possible. We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament.

The spending bill that we are asked to consider is nothing less than a continuation of this disarmament. We are being asked by our colleagues on the other side of the aisle to cut spending on education and training by \$36 billion over 7 years—\$520 million in cuts to Kentucky alone. Ask any kid what cuts are. They know cuts hurt. We are being asked to believe that these are the kind of cuts that can heal this Nation. I believe these are the kind of cuts that will never heal. They will be with us for generations to come.

DEMAGOGUERY AND DECEPTION ON MEDICARE

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, this weekend on "Meet the Press" the minority leader referred to this document as a hoax. This is the Medicare trustees' report. It was not written by conservatives, it was not written by Republicans, but was written by the very people who run Medicare, who are charged with administering the program. It is even signed by three of the President's Cabinet Secretaries: Robert Rubin, Robert Reich, and Donna Shalala. In case the minority leader had not noticed, none of the aforementioned are conservative or Republican. Indeed, most Washington insiders would consider them liberal Democrats.

What is the problem? Could it be that there is a huge split in the Democrat Party? That is part of it, but I think there is something more going on. This report undercuts the minority leader's effort to scare the American public about Medicare. Mr. Speaker, it is truly sad that the liberals in Congress are more concerned about demagoguery and deception than about saving Medicare for our children and our grandchildren.

CALLING FOR FULL HEARINGS ON NAFTA BEFORE PLANNING A NAFTA EXPANSION

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, most Members do not know, tomorrow the Subcommittee on Trade of the Committee on Ways and Means is going to do it to United States workers again: to strike a deal to add Chile to NAFTA, and then bring the matter up here for a vote under a closed rule, with no opportunity for us to amend. The subcommittee has been so secretive that even members of the subcommittee were only given the legislation last Friday, late in the afternoon.

This is just the latest example of what is wrong with U.S. trade policy: the handiwork of a few powerful people behind closed doors without full debate, and little public participation, and at the last minute, with no opportunity for us to fully debate or amend. Full debate is a precondition to representative democracy.

For this reason, I and 50 of my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, are requesting full hearings to be held on the NAFTA record to date by the Committee on Ways and Means before expanding any proposed NAFTA accord to include yet another country. America cannot afford billions more of trade deficit and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of more lost good-paying jobs. America cannot afford another bad trade agreement.

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA SELF-DEFENSE ACT OF 1995

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 204 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 204

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (S. 21) to terminate the United States arms embargo applicable to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed three hours equally divided and controlled